

Assessor's Role Small In Property Tax Scheme

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
 Assemblyman, 46th District

If you own a home, whether it is mortgaged or not, in Los Angeles County, you have received a tax bill which shows in detail the assessed valuation of your land, and the "improvements." The word improvements means any structure or structures, such as your house, your garage, and any other buildings, such as a separate workshop, a separate building for entertaining guests, or a play house for children.

Your tax bill shows the assessed valuation of the land (your lot) separately from the improvements. Add the assessed valuation of your land to the assessed valuation of your improvements, and the total is the assessed valuation of your home, any structures separate from your home, and your lot.

According to Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Watson, this is almost exactly one-fourth of what Mr. Watson and his Deputy County Assessors believe to be the fair market value of your property. One way to determine if this is wrong is to list your property with a licensed real estate broker who belongs to a multiple-listing service, and offer to sell. If you receive one or more firm offers to buy from people who are ready, willing and able to buy your house and lot for four times Watson's assessed valuation, and receive such offer or offers promptly, you will know that Watson probably under-appraised your house and lot. This is by no means infallible but it is worth thinking about.

YOUR TAX bill also shows the assessed valuation of your personal property. If a Deputy County Tax Assessor cannot get into your home, he or she must estimate the value of your personal property, which is difficult to do. In theory your personal property includes everything in your home, or in separate structures on your lot, which is not bolted, nailed, screwed, or otherwise permanently affixed to a structure on your lot. This includes furniture, musical instruments, firearms, paintings, statuary, radios, television sets, jewelry, dishes, pots, pans, and everything movable.

When the former County Tax Assessor who had the job before Watson was sworn into office, sent out his Deputy Assessors, there were curious results. Some ladies wrote to me that when their friends telephoned them that a Deputy Assessor was in the neighborhood, they pulled the blinds, drew the drapes, and locked the doors. The reason they gave for this activity was that if a Deputy Assessor looked through the windows and saw a piano, the personal property assessment jumped.

However, when television first became popular, the presence of an antenna on the roof caused the personal property assessment to jump high, whether the shades were drawn and the doors locked, or not. Fortunately, all this action came to a complete stop when Watson took office. He ordered his deputies to stop peeking through windows even if they see a

concert grand piano under a spot light. Watson does not claim to be an angel; but he hates snooping, sneaking, and peeping.

PLEASE take one more look at your tax bill. You will find an itemized list of the items for which you are taxed. You will find that more than one-half of your taxes, in almost every part of Los Angeles County, are for public schools of one kind or another. They may be junior colleges, unified school districts, or non-unified schools; but these school taxes were not levied by the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor. Those school taxes got there because someone voted for school bond issues, tax-overrides, etc.

There are other taxes itemized on your tax bill. Please

examine them. Some are for storm drains, sewer districts, illumination or lighting districts, and mosquito abatement. There are items for supporting the County of Los Angeles in all its glory. There are items for supporting a city if you live in an incorporated city. You pay county taxes whether you live in an incorporated city or not, but the county taxes are even higher if you live in county territory and not inside an incorporated city. Also, taxes support some sick people, but most sick people are on their own.

All of the above statements are true, although there are local variations. The point I am trying to make is that the Los Angeles County Assessor does nothing more than assess property. This is a comparatively minor factor in de-

Volkswagen Showroom Opened by Russ Thor

A new Volkswagen dealership, Russ Thor Inc., has opened in Torrance.

The dealership will be located at 20410 Hawthorne Blvd., in a new half-million dollar facility.

An authorized dealership, Russ Thor Inc. will offer the full line of Volkswagen cars, trucks, and station wagons.

Thor has been affiliated with Volkswagen in Southern California for several years. Prior to establishing the new dealership, he was Zone Operations Manager for Competition Motors Distributors, Inc., the Volkswagen distributor for Southern California, Arizona, and Southern Nevada. Earlier, Mr. Thor was Sales Manager for a VW dealership in Beverly Hills. His previous automotive experience covers many years, during which time he was Resident Manager for Earl C. Anthony, Inc., Los Angeles, and a Packard dealer in Seattle, Wash.

The dealership, which will occupy 83,000 sq. ft. of property, will have seventeen service stalls plus full repair facilities.

The dealership is located on Hawthorne Blvd., two miles south of the San Diego Freeway, and 1.5 miles north of Highway 101.



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 REG. 1.49 LIQUID ANTI-ACID

97¢

VITAMIN C TABLETS
 250 MG. 500 TABLETS

1.66

Art M-Art Exhibits Seascapes

An exhibit of marine paintings by Arden Von Dewitz is now being held at the Art M-Art, 137 S. Pacific Ave., Redondo Beach.

Dewitz recently became the life drawing instructor at Marymount College in Palos Verdes. He is a resident of Redondo Beach.

"White Thunder," a painting which won the 1964 First Purchase Award at the California State Fair, has been added to the permanent collection of the State Capitol.

Dewitz was commissioned in 1963 to paint the command flagship USS Estes of the Amphibious Forces. The painting is now part of the Air Forces permanent collection.

The exhibit will remain at the Art M-Art until Jan. 4.